

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group I (claims 1-19 and 24-26) in the reply filed on 11-13-09 is acknowledged.
2. This application is in condition for allowance. Claims 20-23 were directed to an invention non-elected without traverse. Accordingly, claims 20-23 have been cancelled by the Applicant, in the reply filed on 11-13-09.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

3. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Todd Holmbo (reg. No. 42,665) on March 12, 2010.

The application has been amended as follows:

In claim 1, at line 2, the words "means of" were deleted. Also in claim 1, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at lines 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10.

In claim 2, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at lines 2 and 3.

In claim 3, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at line 3.

In claim 4, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at line 2.

In claim 5, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at line 2.

In claim 6, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at line 2.

In claim 7, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at lines 2 and 3.

In claim 8, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at line 3.

In claim 11, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at lines 2, 3 and 4.

In claim 15, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at lines 4 and 5.

In claim 16, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at lines 3 and 5.

In claim 18, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at line 2.

In claim 19, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at line 3.

In claim 24, the element reference numbers/labels in parenthesis were deleted at lines 2 and 5.

All of the above amendments include deleting the parenthesis as well.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art does not show or fairly suggest the claimed invention of an apparatus for providing a fluid meniscus with variable configurations by electrowetting, and the medical imaging apparatus utilizing the fluid meniscus, having the claimed structure and claimed limitations, wherein a rejection under 35 USC 102 or 103 would be improper. Please particularly note the combination of claimed elements and claimed limitations, including as recited in claim 1 (the only independent claim), an apparatus for providing a fluid meniscus with variable configurations by electrowetting, the apparatus comprising a fluid chamber; two different fluids separated by a meniscus of which an edge, having different sides, is constrained by the fluid chamber; a first electrowetting electrode; and a second electrowetting electrode, the first electrowetting electrode being arranged to act on a first side of the meniscus edge and the second electrowetting electrode arranged to act separately on a second side of the meniscus edge; and a

voltage control system for providing a different voltage to said first and second electrowetting electrodes respectively to form a selected meniscus configuration. The voltage control system for providing two different voltages to the electrodes respectively provides more control in configuring the meniscus, thereby providing more possible configurations, which improves the operating capabilities of the apparatus.

Therefore, the claimed invention is considered to be in condition for allowance as being novel and nonobvious over the prior art.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Drawings

5. The drawings were received on 5-31-05. These drawings are approved.

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

The following are related U.S. Patent Publications by a common assignee and/or common inventor:

Liedenbaum
Hendriks et al

U.S. Patent Pub. 2007/0115789 A1
U.S. Patent Pub. 2008/0247051 A1

T'Hoof et al
Hendriks et al

U.S. Patent Pub. 2008/0265037 A1
U.S. Patent Pub. 2009/0002807 A1.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Evelyn A. Lester whose telephone number is (571) 272-2332. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, subject to an increased flex schedule.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ricky L. Mack can be reached on (571) 272-2333. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Evelyn A. Lester/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2873